



Would you rather...

Have leaders who lead or legislators who are afraid of reform?

Does Olympia get it?

This is the first email in what will be a series called “Would you rather?”. It is meant to present you with a scenario that we in Olympia are faced with every day when writing the operating budget and let you make the decisions that we must make.

The question that we hear most often from our constituents is, “Does Olympia get it yet?”

The answer, unfortunately, is yes and no: some do and some don’t. The good news is that the people of Washington get it and the tide of awareness is beginning to sweep through our capital city.

Governor Christine Gregoire demonstrated in her State of the State address that she is starting to understand. The Governor called for no ballot measures to increase taxes, offered up large reductions in spending, and started to talk about real government reform. This is a good start.

Others in leadership positions in Olympia are still holding on to the failed policies of the past. Despite the fact that tax dollars will increase between 14-16% over the next two years (about \$32 billion in total), they want to increase spending by over 21%. While people are asking for new ways to deliver services, these leaders are wedded to the status quo.

The Governor challenged the Legislature to come up with bold new solutions to create a better Washington, and we are up for the challenge.

In the coming weeks, we will provide you with specific ideas on how tax dollars can be redirected to priorities. We will offer bold solutions to fix health care, educate our children, reduce the size of government, and improve the quality of the product that is delivered.

It is time for your elected leaders to lead. And that is exactly what we plan to do. We have listened closely to the people. We have listened to the business leaders, the small business owners, the workers, the public employees, and now is the time to provide the leadership and the solutions to transform our state.

If you like the solutions that we provide, please share them with your friends and neighbors. Contact your legislators and let them know that the time is now to focus on priorities and encourage them to stand up for reform.

For next time...

Here is one example that will be the basis for our next article. The Life Sciences Discovery Fund was created by Governor Gregoire to promote research in the state using money from Washington's \$350 million tobacco settlement. Currently, our K12 system and higher education institutions are struggling with budget cuts. Next week, we will discuss the pros and cons of using this money to educate Washington students in science related fields.

